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The Defeat of Og of Basham

21:33 to 22:1

The defeat of Og of Basham DIG: What does Jewish literature say about him? What was true about him? What did the defeat of Og do for Isra'el? How had God shown long-suffering patience to the Amorite people? What lesson had the wilderness generation learned?

REFLECT: When have you discovered that a problem that you had was not as big as you thought it was? Did you defeat it? Why not? How so? How can you help others with their giants? How has God shown long-suffering patience to you? How can you show it to others?

The conquest had begun.



Moses led the **Israelites** on to **Ja'zer**, defeating the **Amorites** there (to see link click [Dk - The Defeat of Sihon of Heshbon](#)). Apparently the only other significant military force on the east side of the Jordan was the **Amorite** force of **Og**. He and his people occupied the heights of **Gilead** and **Bashan**, the high, fertile grazing lands east of Galilee. **Og is legendary in Jewish literature. He is considered to be one of the descendants of the Nephilim** (see the commentary on [Genesis Ca - The Sons of God Married the Daughters of Men](#)). **Rashi reports that Og was the descendent of the fallen angels that descended before the Flood (Rashi in b. Niddah 61a).** In the midrash, he makes frequent cameo appearances in the stories where he doesn't belong, showing up with **Noah** and **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**. His height is exaggerated to the ridiculous extreme. In the Talmud (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Ei - The Oral Law](#)) and **Midrash Rabbah, in this battle with Isra'el, Og, receives Paul Bunyan-like, tall-tale treatment.**⁴⁴⁴

All flights of midrashic fantasy aside, **Og** was a big man. The Torah tells us that **the length of his bed was nine cubits long and four cubits wide** (thirteen-and-a-half feet long and six feet wide), **according to the cubit of a man (Deuteronomy 3:11).** Thirty eight years

earlier **the Exodus generation** had refused to go into the Promised Land because **they** said **there were giants in the Land** (see [By - The Report of the Spies](#)). But now, **the Wilderness Generation**, sustained by **their** faith, pushed forward into battle against that **giant**.

As **the children of Isra'el** turned and pushed north, **they went up along the road to Bashan**; and **'Og, the king of Bashan, marched out against them, he with all his people, to fight at Edrei**. ADONAI said to Moshe, **"Don't be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you with all his people and his land. You will treat him just as you did Sichon, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon."** The Amorites suffered an enormous defeat. **Og was killed and all his armies with him**. In a blinding slaughter, **all the Amorites** were put to the sword. **So they struck him down, with his sons and all his people, until there was no one left alive**. **Og's** dynasty over **Basham** had come to an abrupt end, and no descendant of **the king** would be there to take his rightful place on the throne.⁴⁴⁵ **And then they took control of his land**, which is the modern day Golan Heights (21:3-35). So, **Isra'el** occupied all the Transjordan between **Mount Herman** (Deuteronomy 3:8) and the **Arnon River** and east as far as **the land of the Amorites**.⁴⁴⁶

This was a holy war (see the commentary on [Deuteronomy Ag - The Problem of Holy War in the TaNaKh](#)), with **YHVH** and **the ark of the covenant** leading the way. And as such, **the Amorites** were under **the cherem** judgment of **the LORD** (see the commentary on [Leviticus Ff - Cherem](#)). As **they** did with **Sihon, king of Bashan, the Israelites** completely destroyed the men, women, and children in every city (see [Deuteronomy Av - Moshe Remembers The Conquest of Og](#)). To some, the utter annihilation of **the Amorites** was harsh, even unthinkable. Yet for four-hundred years, **Ha'Shem** had been patiently watching **the Amorite people**. As **He** promised to give **Abraham** the land of **Isra'el**, **He** said: **In the fourth generation [of your descendants] will return here, for the sin of the Amorites is not yet complete** (Genesis 15:16). But, as **Moshe** and **the children of Isra'el** entered the Land, **the iniquity of the Amorites** was **complete**. **Their sin** had reached a point of no return; no more room for salvation. The justice of **ADONAI** was thorough, decisive and final, but **His long suffering patience** (Second Peter 3:9) had given **the Amorites** four-hundred years to repent.⁴⁴⁷

Then the people of Isra'el traveled on and camped in the plains of Mo'ab beyond the Jordan River, opposite Jericho (22:1). **Isra'el** was getting very close. For the first time since the spy story (see [By - The Sin of Kadesh-barnea](#)), **Isra'el** was once again at the edge of **the Promised Land - God's gift** - was in view. Soon that **Land** would be **theirs**. But this verse also sets the stage for one of the most remarkable stories in the Bible

- the dramatic encounter of **Balaam**, the Aramean pagan prophet for hire, with **the God of Isra'el**. Thus, **Chapter 21** of **Numbers** presents a remarkable shift in the fortunes of **the children of Isra'el**. **They** were still rebellious, and would continue to be (see [Ea - Taking a Stand for God](#)), but **they** were now on the march to victory, not fearful of the Canaanites. At last **they** had learned this lesson: **When God is for us, what can humans do against us (Psalm 118:6)?** The **Hebrews** were now moving with **God**.⁴⁴⁸ The conquest had begun.

Haftarah Chukat: Judges 11:32-33

(see the commentary on [Deuteronomy Af](#) - Parashah)

Then Jephthah went over to fight the Ammonites, and the Lord gave them into his hands. He devastated twenty towns from Aroer to the vicinity of Minnith, as far as Abel Keramim. Thus Isra'el subdued Ammon (Judges 11:32-33). Despised because his mother was a prostitute and driven out by his siblings (Judges 11:1-2), Jephthah lived as an outcast in exile. But when his town of Gilead became desperate, they offered him the judgeship to fight the invading Ammonites (Judges 11:4). Jephthah consents, only if the town makes him their leader after he succeeds (Judges 11:9). Then a lengthy quote from parashah Chukat begins, which recounts that Gilead belongs to Isra'el as a result of their victory over the Amorites (Numbers 21:21-25; Judges 11:19-22; Deuteronomy 3:16). Jephthah offers peace to Ammon the aggressor, but negotiations fail (Judges 11:27). Before the battle, Jephthah utters a rash vow (Judges 11:30-31). Then he routed the Ammonites (Judges 11:32-33). The Haftarah ends abruptly, before Jephthah made good on his vow. Thus, the emphasis remains on the appeal for peace, the negotiations, and the ultimate victory.

B'rit Chadashah Chukat: John 3:21

But whoever practices the truth comes into the Light, so that it may be seen clearly that what he has done has been accomplished in God (John 3:21 BSB). Nicodemus was the teacher of Isra'el, but couldn't grasp how being born again could relate to the kingdom of Heaven (John 3:4, 7, and 12). Yeshua alluded to the bronze snake being lifted up in the wilderness (John 3:14; Numbers 21:9). Those who were bitten and dying were not saved because of the snake, but because they were obedient to look at the bronze snake being lifted up. In like manner, those who are dying in the flesh are saved and lifted up (death and resurrection) when they look to the Son of Man with eyes of faith. ADONAI sheds light on acts which glorify Him (Matthew 5:16). Thus, the ones who walk with the Son of Man will come to the light and see Him lifted up. Those who

choose evil cannot see the truth.⁴⁴⁹

Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for being **Almighty** and more powerful than any giants or problems in our lives! The issue that is the deciding factor for who wins, is not how big the giant/problem is; but rather how great and powerful our **God** is. **You** are: omniscient, all-knowing – including the future moves of this giant and everyone involved, omnipotent, all-powerful – **For nothing will be impossible with God (Luke 1:37)**, and omnipresent, everywhere and always with me to help and guide me. **For God Himself has said: I will never leave you or forsake you (Heb 13:5c).**

When my heart is full of love for **You**, then I will never face a challenge too giant for you to handle. When young **David** faced Giant **Goliath**, **he** wisely knew that the battle would not be decided by the strength and power of the men involved; but rather **Almighty God** would win the battle. **Then David said to the Philistine, “You are coming to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin, but I am coming to you in the Name of ADONAI-Tzva’ot, God of the armies of Isra’el, whom you have defied. This very day ADONAI will deliver you into my hand (First Samuel 17:45-46a).**

King Hezekiah, faced an insurmountable giant problem. Assyria had not only conquered the entire northern kingdom of Isra’el, but Assyria had also conquered 46 of the cities of Judah, **Hezekiah’s** kingdom. Only **Jerusalem** was left. Even with only one city still remaining, **God** still had the power to defeat the enemy. No matter how much damage the enemy has already done – **Ha’Shem** is still in control and **God** is able to conquer using ways and methods that belong only to **Him!**

Wisely **King Hezekiah**, instead of complaining or pouting, brought the problem before **his Lord**, placing it in **ADONAI’s** hands and asking **God** to be the victor that all nations would give **Him** the honor and glory. **Hezekiah went up to the House of Adonai and spread it before ADONAI. Hezekiah prayed before ADONAI, saying, “ADONAI, God of Isra’el, who is enthroned upon the cherubim. You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made heaven and earth. Incline Your ear, ADONAI, and hear! Open Your eyes, ADONAI, and see! Listen to the words of Sennacherib that he has sent to mock the living God. It is true, ADONAI, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire – for they were not gods, but the work of human hands – wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. Now, ADONAI our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, ADONAI, are God” (Second Kings 19:14c-19).**

May your children always remember **David's** words of wisdom: - **for the battle belongs to ADONAI - (First Samuel 17:47)**. May I also act wisely by going straight to **You** with the giant problem, placing it in your hands - that **You** may be glorified when **You** win the victory and **You** be given the honor. **Now, ADONAI our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, ADONAI, are God (Second Kings 19:19)**. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen